

Victorian Co-operative News

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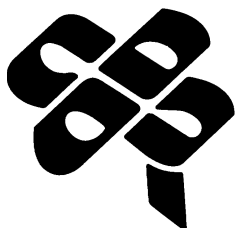
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Published by David Griffiths for the Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd, RMB 1282 Langs Road, Blampied, Victoria 3364



CO-OPERATION AWARDS NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

The Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd has established the Co-operation Awards to recognise individual co-operators and co-operatives.

The awards will be made for the first time this year at the Federation's dinner at the Annual General Meeting.

There are four awards:

- Co-operative of Year
- Co-operator of Year
- Co-operative Distinguished Service
- Co-operator Distinguished Service

Two documents have been prepared by the Co-operation Awards Committee:

- Co-operation Awards Nomination Form
- Co-operation Awards Guidance Notes.

These documents are being mailed to

Victoria's co-operatives.

A distinguished Co-operation Awards panel has been established comprising:

- John Gill
- Dan McMullan
- Owen Slattery
- Brian McIntosh

The panel reserves the right not to make an award in any of the four categories.

The awards will recognise achievement in the particular circumstances applying to the nomination. A person or co-operative may nominate his/her/itself and these will be judged on an equal footing with nomination by another party. Decisions are not subject to appeal.

Nomination forms must be sent to the Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd, RMB 1282 Langs Road, Blampied, Victoria 3364 by 17 August 1998.

Co-operative Booklets

Six new booklets have recently been published by the Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd.

One copy of each booklet is available free to members on request and at cost plus postage for additional copies.

For copies of booklets direct your request to the Secretary, Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd.

The titles of the booklets with the prices for non-members and additional copies for members follows:

Co-operatives and Public Policy \$1

Privatisation of Co-operatives \$1

School Co-operatives \$1

Shared Services Co-operatives for Community Agencies 50c

Social Care Co-operatives \$1

The Co-operative Model \$1

Postage is \$1.10 for 1 – 6 copies of the booklets.

CO-OPERATIVES AND THE GLOBALISATION OF THE ECONOMY

“In an increasingly interdependent world, we must all recognise that we have an interest in spreading the benefits of economic growth as widely as possible and in diminishing the risk either of excluding individuals or groups in our own economies or of excluding certain countries or regions from the benefits of globalisation.”

Source: Final communiqué of the G7 Summit in Lyon, 1995

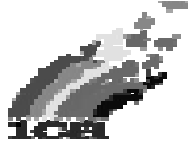
The positive effects of globalisation have not yet been felt by the majority of people of the world. The end of the cold war, deregulation and free trade agreements and the unprecedented advances in telecommunications and information technology have not brought about the peaceful and prosperous society for all which we might have hoped. Instead we have more economically polarised societies which struggle with high unemployment, conflicts and global environment problems.

The drive for profit for profit's sake has had the effect of producing an increasingly unequal society with fewer and fewer large corporations owning most of the world's resources. While the developing world may be the most hard hit by many of these issues the developed nations are not spared. The global reach of corporations means that workforces in the developed world are now being put into direct competition with those of developing nations, thus creating unemployment and driving down wages and living standards in many countries worldwide.

But globalisation has also had many positive effects, leading to economic efficiency and increased development worldwide. The globalisation process has also had a positive impact for co-operatives in many countries, opening up markets and allowing the growth of better and more efficient enterprises. However, this is a situation which differs from country to country depending on the economic and political environment in which the co-operatives are operating and the ability of the different co-operatives to rapidly adapt to the challenges of the new world order.

In the present environment however, co-operatives have become increasingly subject to attacks from the private sector, largely due to a lack of public knowledge about the co-operative difference. It is es-

sential to develop a strong system of communication within the movement so that the different economic sectors understand and support each other as this will lead to stronger ideological unity. Education is essential at all levels and it is of paramount importance that the movement invest in promoting the co-operative image and telling the world about the co-operative difference which is based on our Co-operative Principles and Values. Co-operatives play multifunctional roles that are not only economic, but also social and environmental, which cannot be acquired only through trade. A co-operative differs from other commercial organisations as its main aim is to serve its members, while also having a beneficial impact on the community in which it operates.



Co-operatives cannot survive in the present environment unless countries create a legal and regulatory environment in which independent democratic co-operatives can grow and become competitive and sustainable. In the absence of such conditions some co-operatives have been forced to change their status to that of a limited company.

In order to reverse this trend, co-operatives at the regional and national level must follow the co-operative principle of Co-operation between Co-operatives and form their own alliances not only to promote their economic interests but also to form lobbies to ensure that they too benefit from global opportunities which will not only benefit their members but also ultimately benefit local communities. Wise governments will understand that co-operatives, with their seventh principle of concern for community, can be allies in the provision of services to society. The ICA and its member organisations must take a leading role in this major battle. Co-operatives at the community level must mobilise their members to press for reforms to help other people-oriented groups build a society which puts people first and promotes social justice and environmental protection, rather than unsustainable development.

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE DAY

4 JULY 1998 MESSAGE

LEADING EDGE DIRECTOR TRAINING

Recently our Investigation Services Unit (Co-operatives & Associations) has been invited to participate as part of a steering committee with the Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders Commission (ATSIC) with reference to director training.

The Pilot program will be specifically designed for the Aboriginal Community and will be held at Worawa Aboriginal College, Healesville as a 1-week residential course. There will be 20 persons participating in the course and our involvement will be to assist in the workshop process by developing case scenarios for a 'Mock' Board to make decisions and utilize their new skills learnt at the course.

The course will be delivered on site by La Trobe University as a pilot program to be assessed and used as a model for training – Statewide. This course and its modules could be used for all co-operatives and would be an excellent course for persons contemplating the big step of nominating

and being elected to the Board of a co-operative or association.

Another unique feature of this course will be that each module deals with a specific function and could be directed at perhaps the role of the Bookkeeper/CEO/ Receptionist and therefore could be considered as a multipurpose course for all participants of a co-operative or association.

Welcome again to another edition of the Co-operative Federation of Victoria's newsletter and the Investigation Services (OFT&BA) contribution, where we inform you of some areas that we are currently involved in with the co-operative

We are proud to be actively involved with the delivery of this "Leading Edge" course and will be promoting the content to co-operatives as a model for inclusion into Model Rules of their organisations, to perhaps guide new directors or nominees to participate in the course prior to election to a Board so as they have a thorough understanding of their role, function and responsibilities prior to election. **Sandra Mitchell** – Manager, Investigation Services Business Services OFT&BA

Director Training Course Content

The Pilot course will consist of four modules which will cover:

- Briefing on legislation/changes.
- Your responsibilities as a director to the co-operative and its members.
- Accountabilities as a director.
- Operational guidance to overseeing the co-operative.
- Importance of minute taking/processes.
- Requirements of the Act/Record keeping/Audit/inspections.
- Financial Accountabilities/Delegations/Internal Structures.
- Community Leadership.
- Change management.

Investigation Services(OFTA&BA) 9am-5pm weekdays on 9627-6509 or 9627-6500

Building Rural Futures Through Co-operation

Between the Churchill-based Centre for Rural Communities organised a networking weekend at Mt Baw Baw.

Approximately 40 people attended with a common interest in the future of rural communities.

The following co-operatives were represented at the weekend – Australian Beef Producers Co-operative Ltd, Co-



Local power means local ownership and control.

operative Energy Ltd, Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd, Mirboo North Newspaper Co-operative Ltd and the Victorian Venison Producers' Co-operative Ltd.

A workshop on co-operatives was attended by 15 participants.

The Centre is located at Monash University, Gippsland Campus, Churchill, Victoria 3842

Dairy Co-ops

In a report to the UDV, Inquit Pty Ltd has argued that the economic environment for the dairy industry is creating a unique window of opportunity to consolidate market power of Victoria's dairy co-operatives.

Source: UDV Farm-Gate Economic Environment Study, Inquit Pty Ltd



***Unity in
Diversity***

Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd

RMB 1282 Langs Road
Blampied Victoria 3364
Phone: (03) 53457466
Fax: (03) 53483253
Email: coopvic@netconnect.com.au

New Look

This is the new look Victorian Co-operative News. Because we are committed to continuous improvement, we have reviewed and changed the format of the News. We hope the changes will make the VCN more open and accessible to our readers. We hope you like it. Your comments on the new look would be appreciated.

Agricultural Co-operatives Directors Training Course

The Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd and Monash University are planning to hold a training course for agricultural co-operative directors at the Monash Mt Eliza Business School on the weekend 22-23 August 1998.

Full details of the course and enrolment forms will be mailed to agricultural co-operatives in July.

Not only will the directors receive training via the formal lectures and workshop sessions but the course will provide a forum for the exchange of views and the establishment of beneficial contacts.

Legislation Information Sheets

With the support of the Victorian Government, the Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd has developed a series of information sheets on the Co-operatives Act 1996.

The preparation of the information sheets was co-ordinated by Federation Secretary Tony Gill.

The following information sheets are available:

- Active membership
- Becoming a member
- Body corporate members
- Death of a member
- Directors duties and liabilities
- Holding a postal ballot on requisition
- Issuing bonus shares (trading co-ops only)
- Manner of conducting postal ballots.
- New categories of co-operatives.

- Notices
- Registration as foreign co-operatives
- Rule changing procedures
- Special postal ballots
- Special resolutions
- Untraceable members

The sheets are available free of charge to members of the Federation and for \$10 or \$20 for each sheet for non-members.



"Open membership for people?"